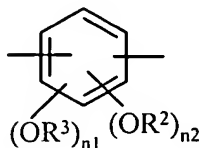


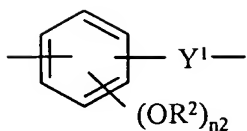
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-23 as follows:

- 5 1. (Original) A compound of formula (I) or a salt thereof which are able to release COX-2 inhibitors and NO (nitrogen oxide) under conditions and according to the parameters set up in test 1 mentioned in the description
- M-T-Y_A-NO₂
- (I)
- 10 wherein:
- M-T is the residue of a COX-2 selective inhibitor, in which T = -SO₂NH-, -SO₂NR-, -CO-, -O-, -S-, -NH-, -N(SO₂R)-, R being alkyl with 1-10 carbon atoms, wherein the COX-2 selective inhibitor, M-TH or M-TOH, has to meet test 2 mentioned in the description,
- 15 Y_A = -(B)_{b0}-(C)_{c0}- wherein:
- b0 e c0 are the integers 1 or 0, with the proviso that b0 and c0 cannot be simultaneously 0,
- B = -T_B-X₂-T_{BI}-, in which:
- T_B = CO or X, wherein X = O, S, NH, NR, and R is as defined above, T_B is CO
- 20 when T is -SO₂NH-, -SO₂NR-, -O-, -S-, -NH-, -N(SO₂R)-, T_B is X when T is -CO-;
- T_{BI} = CO or X, in which X is as defined above;
- X₂ is a divalent radical and is selected from the following compounds:
- a)



- 25 wherein:
- n1 and n2 are integers 0 or 1; R² and R³ are independently selected from H or CH₃;
- b)



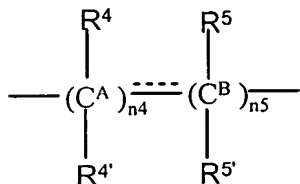
wherein:

n_2 and R^2 are as above defined;

Y^1 is $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-$ or $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-(\text{CH}_2)_{n_2}-$ wherein n_2' is an integer 0 or 1;

5

c)



wherein:

n_4 is an integer from 1 to 20 and n_5 is an integer from 0 to 20, R^4 , $R^{4'}$, R^5 and

10 $R^{5'}$ are independently selected from H, CH_3 , OH, NH_2 , NHCOCH_3 , COOH ; when the bond between the C^A and C^B carbons is a double bond R^4 and R^5 or $R^{4'}$ and $R^{5'}$ are absent;

C is the bivalent radical $-\text{T}_C-\text{Y}-$, wherein:

$\text{T}_C = \text{CO}$, X wherein X is as defined above, or $-(\text{CH}_2)_{n_6}\text{OC}(\text{O})-$ wherein n_6 is an

15 integer from 1 to 20;

Y is a bivalent radical having the following meanings:

d) $-\text{R}^1\text{O}-$, in which R^1 is:

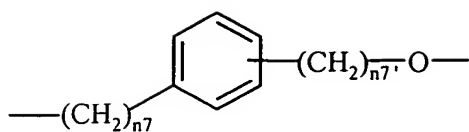
- straight or branched C_1-C_{20} -alkylene optionally containing one or more heteroatoms selected from oxygen, nitrogen, sulphur, or one or more groups -

20 $\text{O}(\text{CO})-$, $-\text{NH}(\text{CO})-$, $-\text{S}(\text{CO})-$, optionally substituted with one or more of the following groups $-\text{OH}$, $-\text{SH}$, $-\text{NH}_2$, $-\text{NHCOR}^6$, in which R^6 is straight or branched C_1-C_{10} -alkyl;

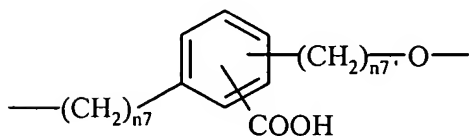
- cycloalkylene containing from 5 to 7 carbon atoms into cycloalkylene ring, wherein one or more carbon atoms can be replaced by heteroatoms selected

25 from nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur, and the ring can be substituted with side chains R^6 , R^6 being as defined above;

e)



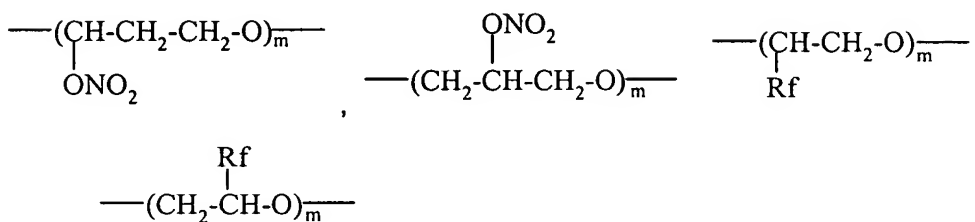
f)



wherein $n7$ is an integer from 0 to 20, and $n7'$ is an integer from 1 to 20;

5

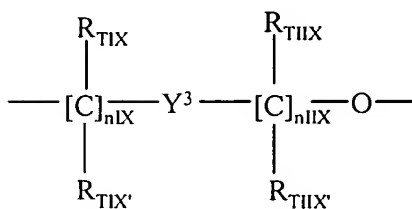
g)



10

wherein m is an integer from 1 to 6, Rf is a hydrogen atom or CH_3 ;

h)



(IA)

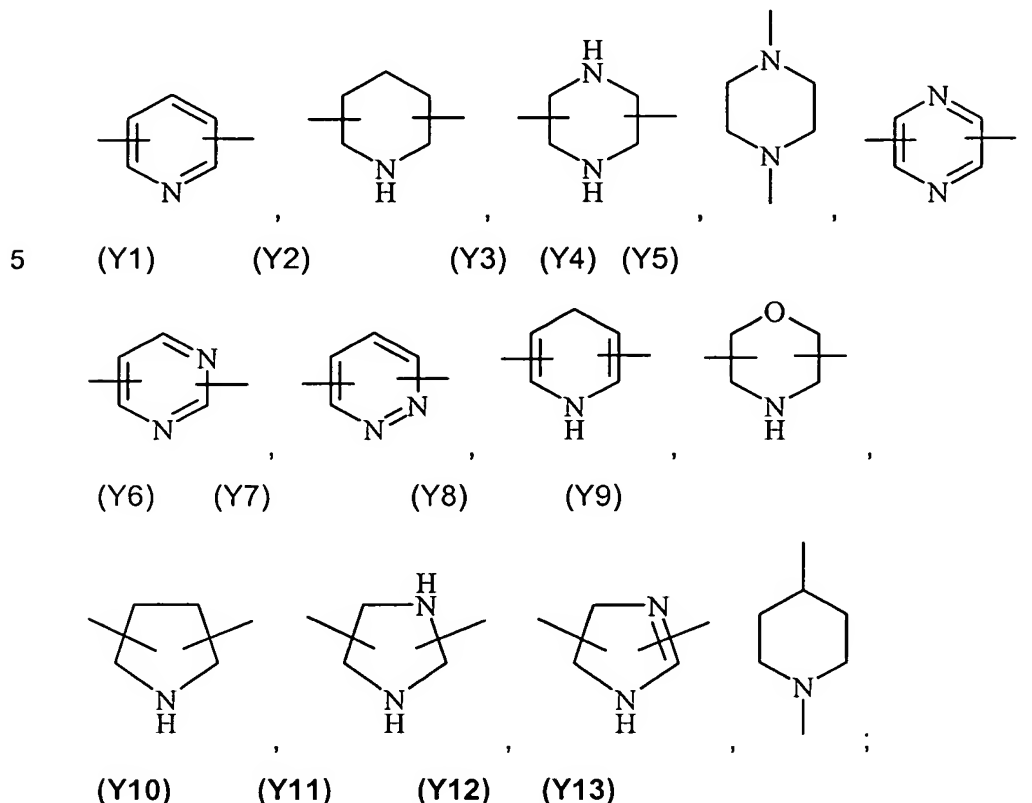
15 wherein:

$n\text{IX}$ is an integer from 0 to 10;

$n\text{IIX}$ is an integer from 1 to 10;

R_{TIX} , $\text{R}_{\text{TIX}'}$, R_{TIIIX} , $\text{R}_{\text{TIIIX}'}$, are the same or different, and are H or straight or branched C_1 - C_4 -alkyl;

Y^3 is an heterocyclic saturated, unsaturated or aromatic 5 or 6 members ring, containing one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen, sulphur, and selected from



10 with the proviso that:

when $b_0 = 0$, $c_0 = 1$ and $T = -SO_2NH-$, $-SO_2NR-$, $-O-$, $-S-$, $-NH-$, $-N(SO_2R)-$

wherein R is as defined above, then $T_C = (CO)$ or $-(CH_2)_{n6}O(CO)-$;

when $b_0 = 0$, $c_0 = 1$ and $T = CO$ then $T_C = X$ wherein X is as defined above;

when $b_0 = 1$ and $T = -SO_2NH-$, $-SO_2NR-$, $-O-$, $-S-$, $-NH-$, $-N(SO_2R)-$ wherein R is

15 as defined above, then $T_B = CO$;

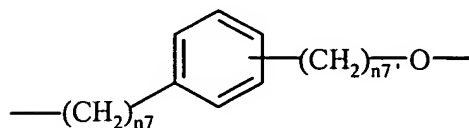
when $b_0 = 1$ and $T = CO$ then $T_B = X$ wherein X is as defined above;

when $b_0 = 1$, $c_0 = 1$ and $T_{B1} = CO$ then $T_C = X$ wherein X is as above defined;

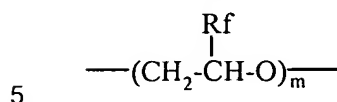
when $b_0 = 1$, $c_0 = 1$ and $T_{B1} = X$, wherein X is as above defined, then $T_C = (CO)$;

20 when $b_0 = 1$, $c_0 = 0$ the T_{B1} has only the meaning of $-O-$;

2. (Original) A compound of formula (I) according to claim 1 wherein $b_0 = 0$, $c_0 = 1$, T and T_c are as defined in claim 1, Y is a straight C_1 - C_6 alkylene or



wherein n_7 is 0 or 1, and $n_{7'}$ is 1 or 2, or



wherein m is 2, R_f is hydrogen.

3. (Original) A compound of formula (I) according to claim 2 wherein $b_0 = 0$, $c_0 = 1$,

10 T = $-N(SO_2R)-$, $T_c = CO$ or $-(CH_2)_{n_6}O(CO)-$ wherein $n_6 = 1$ and $R = CH_3$.

4. (Original) A compound of formula (I) according to claim 2 wherein $b_0 = 0$, $c_0 = 1$, T = $-SO_2NH-$ and $T_c = CO$ or $-(CH_2)_{n_6}O(CO)-$ wherein $n_6 = 1$.

15 5. (Currently Amended) A compound of formula (I) or a salt thereof according to claims 1 to 4 wherein M-T is a residue of a COX-2 selective inhibitor of formula M-TH or M-TOH selected from the group consisting of 4-(5-methyl-3-phenylisoxazol-4-yl)benzenesulfonamide, 4-[5-(4-methylphenyl)-3-(trifluoromethyl)-1H-pyrazol-1-yl]benzenesulfonamide, 4-(4-cyclohexyl-2-methyloxazol-5-yl)-2-fluorobenzenesulfonamide, N-[6-[(2,4-difluorophenyl)thio]-2,3-dihydro-1-oxo-1H-inden-5-yl]-methanesulfonamide, N-(4-nitro-2-phenoxyphenyl) methanesulfonanilide, N-(4-nitro-2-cyclohexyloxyphenyl)methane sulfonanilide, 2-[(2-chloro-6-fluorophenyl)amino]-5-methylbenzeneacetic acid, 2-[(2-chloro-6-fluorophenyl)-amino]-4-methylbenzeneacetic acid.

20

25

6. (Original) A compound according to claim 3, that is N-[6-(2,4-difluorophenylthio)-2,3-dihydro-1-oxo-1-inden-5-yl]-N-[(4-nitrooxy)butyryloxymethyl] methanesulfonamide.

7. (Original) A compound according to claim 3, that is N-[6-(2,4-difluorophenylthio)-2,3-dihydro-1-oxo-1-inden-5-yl]-N-[3-(nitrooxymethyl)benzoyloxymethyl] methanesulfonamide.
- 5 8. (Original) A compound according to claim 3, that is (Z)-2-(4-methylsulphonylphenyl)-3-phenyl-2-buten-1,4-diol-1-[(4-nitrooxymethyl)benzoate]].
9. (Original) A compound according to claim 4, that is N-[4-[5-(4-methylphenyl)-3-(trifluoromethyl)-1H-pyrazol-1-yl]phenylsulfonyl]-4-nitrooxybutanamide.
- 10 10. (Original) A compound according to claim 3, that is N-(3-nitrooxymethyl)benzoyloxymethyl-N-(2-phenoxy-4-nitrophenyl)methanesulfonamide.
- 15 11. (Currently Amended) A compound of formula (I) or a salt thereof according to claims 1-40 as therapeutic agent.
12. (Currently Amended) Use of a compound of formula (I) or a salt thereof
- 20 according to claims 1-40, for preparing a drug that can be employed in the treatment or prophylaxis of inflammatory disorders, pain and fever.
13. (Original) Use according to claim 12, characterized in that the inflammatory disorders are selected from the group consisting of, but not limited to, arthritis,
- 25 reumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, dismenhorrea, allergic rhinitis, sinusitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, dermatitis, psoriasis, cystic fibrosis, multiples sclerosis, vasculitis and organ transplant rejection.
14. (Currently Amended) Use of a compound of general formula (I) or a salt
- 30 thereof according to claims 1-40, for preparing a drug that can be employed in the treatment or prophylaxis of cardiovascular diseases.
15. (Original) Use according to claim 14, characterized in that the cardiovascular diseases are selected from the group consisting of, but not
- 35 limited to, atherosclerosis, restenosis, coronary artery disease, angina, diabetes

mellitus, diabetic nephropathy, diabetic retinopathy, stroke and myocardic infarct.

16. (Currently Amended) Use of a compound of general formula (I) or a salt thereof according to claim 1-40, for preparing a drug that can be employed in the treatment or prophylaxis of gastrointestinal disorders.

17. (Original) Use according to claim 16, characterized in that the gastrointestinal disorders are selected from the group consisting of, but not limited to, inflammatory intestinal disorders, Crohn's disease, gastritis, ulcerative colitis, peptic ulcer, haemorrhagic ulcer, gastric hyperacidity, dyspepsia, gastroparesis, Zollinger-Ellison's syndrome, bacterial infections, hypersecretory states associated with systemic mastocytosis or basophilic leukaemia and hyperhystaminemia.

18. (Currently Amended) Use of a compound of general formula (I) or a salt thereof according to claim 1-40, for preparing a drug that can be employed in the treatment or prophylaxis of tumors and Alzheimer's disease.

19. (Currently Amended) Use of a compound of general formula (I) or a salt thereof according to claim 1-40, for preparing a drug that can be employed for treating or preventing disorders resulting from elevated levels of COX-2.

20. (Original) Use according to claim 19, characterized in that the disorders resulting from elevated levels of COX-2 are selected from the group consisting of, but not limited to, angiogenesis, arthritis, asthma, bronchitis, menstrual cramps, tendinitis, bursitis, neoplasia, ophthalmic diseases, pulmonary inflammations, central nervous system disorders, allergic rhinitis, atherosclerosis, endothelial disorders, organs and tissues preservation, inhibition and/or prevention of platelets aggregation.

21. (Currently Amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and a pharmaceutically effective amount of a compound of general formula (I) or a salt thereof according to claim 1-40.

22. (Original) A composition according to claim 21 in a suitable form for the oral, parenteral, rectal, topic and transdermic administration, by inhalation spray or aerosol or iontophoresis devices.

5

23. (Currently Amended) Liquid or solid pharmaceutical composition for oral, parenteral, rectal, topic and transdermic administration or inhalation in the form of tablets, capsules and pills eventually con enteric coating, powders, granules, gels, emulsions, solutions, suspensions, syrups, elixir, injectable forms,

10

suppositories, in transdermal patches or liposomes, containing a compound of formula (I) according to claim 1-40 or a salt thereof and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.